

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A multiple-zone power control system for controlling power distribution to electric heating elements, the system comprising:

a power control unit comprising a plurality of control zones for controlling the delivery of power to respective electric heating elements; and

a touch-sensitive key for alternately activating and deactivating a designated one of the plurality of control zones when the touch-sensitive key is touched by a user;

wherein the system has a configuration such that when all of the plurality of control zones are deactivated, the touch-sensitive key must be touched for at least a cold-start duration predetermined first time period in order to activate the designated one of the plurality of control zones; and

wherein the system has a configuration such that when at least one of the plurality of control zones is activated, the touch-sensitive key must be touched for at least a minimum key-touch duration predetermined second time period in order to activate the designated one of the plurality of control zones, the ~~minimum key-touch duration~~ second time period being shorter than the ~~cold-start duration~~ first time period.

2. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the system has a configuration such that when the designated one of the plurality of control zones is activated, the designated one of the plurality of control zones will always be deactivated when the touch-sensitive key is touched for at least a ~~minimum key-~~

~~touch duration predetermined third time period, the minimum key-touch duration~~
~~third time period~~ being shorter than the ~~cold start duration~~ first time period.

3 and 4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently amended) A method of reducing inadvertent power activation during a wiping/cleaning operation of a touch-sensitive power control input panel, comprising steps of:

sensing that a touch-sensitive on/off key has been touched by a user;

after the step of sensing, activating a power control zone that corresponds to the touch-sensitive on/off key if when at least one other power control zone is activated and the on/off key remains touched for at least a ~~minimum~~ first predetermined key-touch duration; and

after the step of sensing, activating a power control zone that corresponds to the touch-sensitive on/off key if when the on/off key remains touched for at least a cold start duration, the ~~minimum~~ predetermined key-touch duration being shorter than the cold start duration.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising a step of, after the step of sensing, deactivating the power control zone that corresponds to the touch-sensitive on/off key if the power control zone that corresponds to the touch-sensitive on/off key is activated and the on/off key remains touched for at least a ~~minimum~~ second predetermined key-touch duration.

7-36. (Cancelled)

37. (New) A multiple-zone power control system for controlling power distribution to electric heating elements, the system comprising:

a power control unit comprising a plurality of control zones for controlling the delivery of power to respective electric heating elements; and

a touch-sensitive key for alternately controlling activation and deactivation of a designated one of the plurality of control zones responsive to touch by a user to the touch-sensitive key;

means for determining touch duration on the touch-sensitive key;

means for determining if all of the plurality of control zones are deactivated;

means for preventing activation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones, when the plurality of control zones are deactivated, upon touch of the touch-sensitive key until the touch duration exceeds a predetermined first time period;

means for determining if at least one of the plurality of control zones is activated; and

means for preventing activation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones, when at least one of the plurality of control zones is activated, upon touch of the touch-sensitive key until the touch duration exceeds a predetermined second time period, the second time period being shorter than the first time period.

38. (New) The system of claim 37, including means for maintaining an association of the touch-sensitive key to control deactivation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones when the designated one of the plurality of control zones is activated, and means for preventing deactivation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones, when the designated one of the plurality of control zones is activated, upon touch of the touch-sensitive key until the touch duration exceeds a predetermined third time period, the third time period being shorter than the first time period.

39. (New) A method of reducing inadvertent power activation of a multiple-zone power control system that controls power distribution to electric heating elements and that has a power control unit having a plurality of control zones for controlling the delivery of power to respective electric heating elements, and a touch-sensitive key for alternately controlling activation and deactivation of a designated

one of the plurality of control zones responsive to touch by a user to the touch-sensitive key, the method comprising steps of:

- determining touch duration on the touch-sensitive key;
- determining if all of the plurality of control zones are deactivated;
- preventing activation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones, when the plurality of control zones are deactivated, upon touch of the touch-sensitive key until the touch duration exceeds a predetermined first time period;
- determining if at least one of the plurality of control zones is activated; and
- preventing activation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones, when at least one of the plurality of control zones is activated, upon touch of the touch-sensitive key until the touch duration exceeds a predetermined second time period, the second time period being shorter than the first time period.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, further comprising maintaining an association of the touch-sensitive key to control deactivation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones when the designated one of the plurality of control zones is activated, and preventing deactivation of the designated one of the plurality of control zones, when the designated one of the plurality of control zones is activated, upon touch of the touch-sensitive key until the touch duration exceeds a predetermined third time period, the third time period being shorter than the first time period.